

# Report on Thoroughbred Stallions



AT "RESTLESS OAKS"  
McELHATTAN, PENNSYLVANIA





"RESTLESS OAKS"  
(Original House Built 1798)  
(Frontispiece)



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# Report On Thoroughbred Stallions

Sent to "Restless Oaks"

Clinton County, Pennsylvania

By the Breeding Bureau of The Jockey Club, 1910-1919

Together With a Brief Account of Some Early  
Running Races In the West Branch Valley



*"Evil spirits enter not into a tent where  
there is a thoroughbred horse."*

—Arab Maxim

Compiled by HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

(Member of the National Remount Association)

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## Report for Breeding Bureau, The Jockey Club On Stallions at "Restless Oaks"

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RESTLESS OAKS" farm is located in Clinton County, in the Valley of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River, in Central Pennsylvania. This valley, which is about sixty-five miles long, is noted for its successful tobacco plantations and general fertility of the soil. One hundred years ago it was the centre of thoroughbred horse-breeding activities, and several English stallions were owned in the valley. Horse racing was very popular, especially long-distance racing. Endurance tests were held between Lock Haven and Jersey Shore, a distance of twelve miles, and shorter races frequently took place in which horses from the West Branch Valley competed against animals brought from Penn's Valley, Buffalo Valley, Nittany Valley and other adjacent sections. Most of the names of these old-time, long-distance racers, and even descriptions of them, are lost, but one called Sea Turtle, for several years, a pre-eminent champion, was said to have been a strongly-made brown horse of pure English breed. The riders were mostly Negro and Indian boys. The owners represented the scions of the old-time Scotch-Irish pioneer families. They were natural lovers of blooded horses, and every farmer's son on coming of age was given a prancing stallion as a saddle beast. Later on, with the building of fair grounds at Lock Haven, at the head of the valley, at Jersey Shore, Williamsport, Milton and Lewisburg further down, the trotting bred horse in a measure superseded the thoroughbred, and harness racing enjoyed great popularity among the leading families of the valley from the time of the close of the Civil War until the widespread craze for automobiles, about 1908. At the same time running races were generally held at all the fairs. Many standard bred stallions were brought to the valley, and much good trotting and pacing stock produced. Some of it sold for large prices in New York, and the valley was proud that Robert J., 2:01, a noted pacer, was bred and raised almost in the shadow of the old fair grounds at Williamsport. Almost before the widespread demand for automobiles, harness racing and light driving had begun to lose its popu-





NEW BARN, "RESTLESS OAKS," 1915  
(Designed by F. Arthur Riarhard, Williamsport, Pa.; C. H. Fritz, Contractor, McElhattan)



larity, as the best people had been crowded out by the professional element, and fewer light harness horses were bred each year. Instead the prosperous farmers turned their attention to breeding draft horses. Many large draft stallions, including some imported Percherons, Belgians and Clydesdales, were purchased by individuals; others were "roaded" through the valley or brought in by stock companies, and known as "company horses." When the automobile furore descended on the valley, all horse breeding seemed to stop over night. What racing stables that remained were disbanded at auction sales, stallions castrated or sent to the auction houses in Philadelphia and other cities, while brood mares were put to ignominious drudgery in anticipation of the speedy coming of the "horseless age." But the horseless age did not materialize, and the demand for horses kept up. Yet the fear of its arriving almost any day, worked up by the automobile sales papers, hung like a Sword of Damocles over the farmers, with the result that horse breeding on anything like its old basis was not resumed. In 1906 the State of Pennsylvania passed a stallion law compelling all pure bred and grade stallions which stood for cash to undergo a rigid veterinarian examination. It was about this time that the undersigned endeavored 'o try to bring back horse breeding in his home locality, where, apart from a weed or two, a stallion had not been kept for a decade. In 1910 the Jockey Club Breeding Bureau, through its Secretary, Mr. Algeron Daingerfield, co-operated by sending the stallion Tride, by Tristan, as pioneer in this unpromising field. The horse had met with an accident on his way to New York, and was a rough-looking brute when he emerged from his box in the cellar of Van Tassell & Kearney's repository on East Thirteenth Street, New York City, to be loaded into the box car. He was slow to cure of his wounds, which were received in a railroad wreck, and being naturally rather shaggy-looking, he surprised the farmers who were invited to see him on his arrival at "Restless Oaks" as being very different from their conception of the thoroughbred gained from seeing old Currier & Ives lithographs of Longfellow, Tom Bowling and Harry Bassett, or the big, powerful short-bred bushwhackers that ran at the county fairs. Tride was a bay horse with black points, standing about 15.3 hands, and weighing about 950 pounds. "He is too small," "We couldn't sell the produce of such a horse," "There is no demand for saddlers or light drivers," were the comments recalled at random, which made up the concensus of opinion. There was no thought then of war,



IMPORTED "BAFOUILLEUR"  
Bay Horse, 1913, by Meddler-Ballantrae

and horses for military purposes a far cry. The writer then showed the farmers a large grade draft stallion, which delighted them very much; also a registered saddle stallion and a standard bred which impressed them but little more than the thoroughbred. "Too light," was the verdict on all but the drafter, and it must be remembered that in this region a horse is always described by his weight, and not by his height or conformation. Tride made the season of 1910 and 1911 at the writer's farm, serving a few scrub mares belonging to mountaineers, who still drove to town in dilapidated buggies. Nearly all the other mares that came there, about twenty-five, went to the grade Percheron. That was not what the writer was trying to do, so he disposed of the draft stallion. In 1912, Go-Between, winner of the Suburban Handicap of 1906, was purchased in Kentucky from Mr. Irving H. Wheatcroft. He was the handsomest horse that the writer has ever seen in America or Europe, the very beau ideal of a thoroughbred. Go-Between's career was romantic, winning thirteen straight races in 1906, and the Suburban as a gelding was discovered to be a stallion, which resulted in his being disqualified from racing for the balance of the season. That virtually ended his racing career. He was a "crazy horse" when it came to breeding. Some farmers who forgot their prejudice against "small horses," in viewing this superb specimen—yet the son of imp. Meddler and Ida K., stood 15.3, bred roadster type mares to him, and he got one, possibly more, good colts. But his savagery made it difficult to breed him, and on one occasion he knocked down his handler with his forefeet and was trampling him, when a Negro, hearing the outcries, rushed into the box and dragged the old man out, more dead than alive. Go-Between had been bred to a number of thoroughbred mares in Kentucky, but the writer does not know that any of his progeny ever matured or got to the races. In 1914 the writer stood Briareus, a son of Royal Flush III and Briar Sweet, which won fifty races for him at the County Fair tracks in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, West Virginia and Maryland, and in 1915 first prize in the class for stallions of all breeds at the Frederick County Fair, Maryland. Briareus was only a Galloway, and naturally the farmers did not take to him, but he was bred to several mares. In 1915 the Jockey Club's slogan for breeding horses for military purposes penetrated even the interior districts, and to help it along the writer started a publicity campaign in a number of papers throughout Central Pennsylvania, urging the prime claims of the



thoroughbred as a stock horse. Mr. Daingerfield was asked to aid this propaganda, and responded in behalf of the Breeding Bureau with the white faced seal brown stallion Eddie Graney, by Ossary-May V., and famed as a "four miler." Eddie Graney stood about 15.3 hands, but was hard to condition, and generally looked too fine to meet with the requirements of the local breeders. As one of them put it, "We cannot afford to risk to breed to anything that will throw a little colt, as if this talk about cavalry mounts and gunners comes to nothing we will be stuck and the war will be over before the colts are saleable." A giant horse like Advance Guard or Lally would have filled their requirements. Eddie Graney proved a savage, and though a number of mares were brought to him, he served but a few. In order to help the work along the Breeding Bureau was again appealed to in 1916 and graciously responded with the chestnut horse Beaucoup, by Ornament. This horse had been vegetating on a farm in the Genessee Valley, New York, and had acquired a chronic opthalmia. Upon reaching Pennsylvania he was denied a license by the State Breeding Bureau, and being pronounced incurable, was, with Mr. Daingerfield's approval, destroyed. In 1917, Eddie Graney was the representative of the thoroughbred at the writer's home, and again in 1918. In the summer of 1917 the Jockey Club sent the two-year-old brown colt Peronne, 15:3, by Ossary out of Orsina, from the stables of Mr. A. King Macomber. It was hoped that with size and breeding he might fill the want. Peronne's disposition is good; he makes a saddle horse that a lady can ride, and has no vices in or out of the stall. He has developed slowly, and if he fills out sufficiently ought to make a good stock horse. In February, 1919, the Breeding Bureau has sent Baffouilleur, bay horse, by Meddler-Ballantrae, bred in France by Mr. Clarence H. Mackay, and imported by Mr. Joseph E. Widener, of Philadelphia. This horse, foaled in 1913, ought to find many admirers among the Pennsylvania farmers who seem to be gradually awakening to the fact that the military horse type has come to stay. This is the case especially since the Allies bought every medium-sized horse in the West Branch Valley in 1915-1916. At the same time the prejudice against "small stallions" is deep-rooted, and the thoroughbred, to be successful, must have size and substance. The way to produce military horses in suitable numbers would be for the Government to announce that it would purchase a certain number of home-bred three-year-old colts, coming up to specifications, in every county of Pennsyl-



"PERONNE"  
Brown Colt, 1915, by Ossary-Orsina

vania, annually, for the next ten years, at \$150 per animal. A market having been provided, the Government could secure ten thousand military horses every year, if it so desired, on this basis. The farmers, in view of the popularity of the automobile, and the alleged coming of the tractor, will not breed horses which can now only be sold at prices far below the cost of production. If Baffouilleur is successful, the writer plans to offer to take an option on the best colt, and give a cash prize to be competed for by his progeny at the fair grounds in Lock Haven in the fall of 1920, as there is talk of reviving the old Clinton County Fair. It may be added that according to the statistics published by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Horse Breeding Bureau, out of eight hundred stallions of all breeds licensed in the state in 1918 there were but thirteen thoroughbreds. In order to meet military and sporting requirements there should have been one hundred. The thoroughbreds standing at "Restless Oaks" are the only specimens of this race that have been regularly advertised for breeding in the entire West Branch Valley in half a century.

### **LIST OF THOROUGHBRED STALLIONS AT "RESTLESS OAKS," McELHATTAN, PA., 1910-1919.**

Tride, b. h., 1901, by Tristan; imp. Pride of Waltham .....	1910-1911
Go-Between, b. h., 1901, by imp. Meddler; Ida K., by Farandole.....	1912-1913
Briareus, ch. h., 1907, by Royal Flush III; Briar Sweet, by Bramble.....	1914
Eddie Graney, br. h., 1907, by Ossary-May V. ....	1915-1916-1917-1918
Beaucoup, ch. h., 1907, by Ornament-Ollie Bell .....	1916 (not bred)
Peronne, br. h., 1915, by Ossary-Orsina....	1917-1918-1919
(Orsini, Ottery or Ossoli would have been a better name for this colt.)	
Imported Baffouilleur, b. h., 1913, by Meddler-Ballantrae .....	1919

In conclusion, the writer wishes to thank the Breeding Bureau of The Jockey Club and Mr. Algernon Daingerfield, Secretary, for generous co-operation and assistance at all times.

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER.

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C., MARCH 27, 1919.



## APPENDIX I.

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### SOME EARLY RUNNING RACES IN THE WEST BRANCH VALLEY.

Only a few faint memorials exist of the golden age of running races in the West Branch Valley, and these from some of the very old people. Jacob Quiggle, of Clinton County (1824-1911), was fond of telling of some of the great races of the past. He was present as a boy of eight or ten years of age when Sea Turtle won the championship of the West Branch Valley, in the twelve-mile race from the Great Island (Lock Haven) to Jersey Shore, over an almost straightaway course. The race was run on July 4, probably in the year 1828 or 1829. There were eight starters, the names of the horses, owners and places at finish being as follows:

Sea Turtle, br. h., owned by Andrew Stewart, Jersey Shore; Rider, Indian Nichols.....	1
Great Island, b. h., owned by Myers Brothers, Great Island; Rider, Black George.....	2
Shickelamy, b. h., owned by Col. Michael Spyker, Derrstown (now Lewisburg); Rider, S. Smith.....	3
Water Sprite, ch. m., owned by E. E. Berry, Youngmanstown (now Mifflinburg); Rider, D. Craig.....	4
Lafayette, gr. h., owned by Col. M. Anthony, Williamsport; Rider, Yellow Frank.....	5
Jaysburg, b. g., owned by C. Blackburn, Jaysburg (now New- berry); Rider, Indian Alex.....	6
Col. Weirick, b. g., owned by Major H. T. Frick, Milton; Rider, J. Stoner.....	7
Make-Believe, blk. m., owned by E. S. Pfoutz, Jersey Shore; Rider, Indian David.....	8

A great crowd was present; there was heavy betting, Sea Turtle being favorite. Catch weights were carried. Sea Turtle easily proved his superiority, and led from start to finish. As stated elsewhere, the winner was said to be the offspring of an English thoroughbred stallion. He was about five years old when he won this big race. His grand dam had been captured from the Indians by Lieut. Terrence Quinn, of the Rangers. John H. Chatham (1847— ), also of Clinton County, tells of a match



race between the best horse in the West Branch Valley against the best horse from Penn's Valley (Centre County), held on the Great Island straightaway about the year that Lock Haven was laid out (1834), on the Fourth of July. The account was given to Mr. Chatham by his father, John H. Chatham, Sr. (1808-1894). The horses named finished as follows:

Impetuous, ch. g., owned by General Potter, Jr. (Penn's Valley); Ridden by J. Trout.....	1
Great Island, Jr., b. g., owned by Myers Brothers (West Branch Valley); Ridden by Black George.....	2

The finish was close, and there was some crowding in the final dash for home. After the race, when General Potter, an elegant gentleman, was leading his victorious horse back to his tent to be cooled off, one of the Myers brothers, a rather hot-tempered individual, rushed at the General and struck at him with his fist. A number of West Branch Valley sportsmen, Colonel Kleckner, Colonel Dunn and Judge Baird, sprang between and threw the fellow into the dust, pummeling him soundly for his breach of sporting etiquette and hospitality. General Potter was loudly cheered as he passed the entire length of the spectators' enclosure to the tent. So much money was lost by the local racing habitues, and so many threats were passed that this was the last inter-valley match race held on the Great Island course. This straightaway, probably a trifle less than a mile in length, is now a favorite speeding place for automobiles. In the eighties of the last century it was much frequented by road drivers, among them Captain David A. Cochran, of Jersey Shore; Judge McCormick, Barton Pardee (owner of Lu Princeton, 2:01; George Gano, 2:02, and other good ones), Eamonn Wilt, O. F. Felmlee, Edward Ball, Sheriff Peck, Peter Lease, of Lock Haven, James C. Packer, of Sunbury, and George R. Thompson, of Chatham's Run, who indulged in many friendly brushes on this historic path. The last running races in Clinton County were held at the race track in Lock Haven in 1915. In 1908, on Memorial Day, July 4, and Labor Day, running races were held in Clinton County, at McElhattan, in which a large number of horses competed. The principal race on Labor Day was called "The Sea Turtle Cup," after the early champion of the valley, and the venerable Jacob Quiggle, who saw the twelve-mile race run nearly eighty years before, was one of the interested spectators. Running races were held at the County Fairs at

Milton (Northumberland County) and Lewisburg (Union County) in 1917 and 1918. With the renewed popularity of "The Sport of Kings," surely this grand pastime and its patriotic adjunct, *improving the breed of horses*, may again come to its own in the Valley of the Otzinachson, as the Indians called the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. "Evil spirits enter not into a tent where there is a thoroughbred horse."



## APPENDIX II.

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INSCRIPTION ON CORNER STONE OF BARN AT "RESTLESS  
OAKS."

LOVE HORSES AND TAKE CARE OF THEM,  
SPARE NO TROUBLE;  
BY THEM COMES HONOR, BY THEM COMES BEAUTY.

—Ben-el-Abbas.

(Quoted by Abd-el-Kader.)

### APPENDIX III.

COPY OF LETTER FROM MR. F. K. STURGIS, SECRETARY OF THE JOCKEY CLUB.

Mr. Algernon Daingerfield,  
18 East 41st Street,  
New York.  
36 Broad Street,  
New York, April 22nd, 1919

Dear Mr. Daingerfield:-

I have read with much appreciation and now return to you Col. Shoemaker's letter, dated March 31st, 1919.

I note his appreciation of our efforts and I wish to convey to him through you my recognition of his endeavors to sustain the thoroughbred horse in his section of Pennsylvania.

I do not gather from his letter that he seeks any other thoroughbred stallion at this time. If I am mistaken in this I should be glad to have you talk with me about it and see if there is anything we could do to strengthen his position as a breeder of the thoroughbred.

His account is very interesting and I wish that more of the people to whom we send horses would be equally explicit and satisfactory.

Very sincerely yours,  
(Signed) F. K. STURGIS.

